DESIGNING PUBLIC PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE UN FOR MAXIMUM SDG IMPACT

This report was prepared by Ms. Norine Kennedy with background provided by Red Flag, for the All In Roundtable on Inclusive Multilateralism, SDGs, and Business, jointly organized by the United States Council for International Business (USCIB), the International Organisation of Employers (IOE), the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), and ICC Switzerland

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Executive Summary

Public private partnerships in the UN context have a long and positive history, with numerous successful examples, such as “Every Woman, Every Child” and the UN Environment Global Partnership for Clean Fuel in Vehicles. Indeed, some multilateral bodies have such established partnering and engagement relationships with the private sector built into their DNA, such as the ILO and the OECD with their official roles for business.

As the global community continues its quest to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030 and other associated 2015 UN outcomes, including the UN Framework Convention and the Addis Ababa Action Agenda (AAAA), this paper takes as a given that partnerships are inherent in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. But is the multilateral system taking full advantage of the potential of partnerships with non-state actors, and especially business, for SDG implementation?

Despite many positive examples of effective and established partnerships, the multilateral system is predominantly inter-governmental in nature and can frequently seem challenged to consistently connect with a cooperative, flexible and inherently innovative model of partnering with non-state actors and business. Moreover, many institutions are not yet adequately structured or resourced to support the needed scale of partnerships towards the shared goals of sustainable development.

The questions this discussion starter will take up include:

- What is different today about public-private partnerships with the UN, specifically relating to 2015 shared goals?
- How has the UN context changed?
- How can partnerships deliver the greatest impact for shared goals?
- How do partnerships fit in to inclusive multilateralism?
- What are the incentives and deterrents to public-private partnerships with the UN?
- How can the quantity and quality of public private partnerships with the UN be encouraged to help deliver implementation of the 2015 outcomes?

This paper highlights existing platforms for various forms of public-private partnership and engagement with the UN. The number and quality of these and other platforms are encouraging, yet many still view partnerships from the perspective of government, often from a standpoint more suited to compliance than to innovation. Too often, the tendency is to regard the private sector in partnerships predominantly as a source of funding (and potential reputation risk).

Some intergovernmental bodies predominantly focus on the “risks” of engagement with business, rather than the opportunities, and prioritize risk avoidance at the expense of positive impact. With 2030 a little over a decade out, the time has come for broad, ambitious approaches to creating shared value engagement with governments and international organizations to achieve the SDGs, including in cooperation with the UN itself. Such collaborative efforts will have to aim high and go to scale in order to be transformational.
New public-private partnerships within the UN system will need to deliver impact, bringing forward the special capabilities and resources unique to each non-state entity, including business.

Providing scale and quality of partnering with the UN system will require approaches that:

- seek out the most capable partners and incent partnerships
- treat all partners as equally integral to achieving common goals while respecting the accountable role of government
- engender transparency, inclusiveness and accountability with good governance and clear metrics for impact.

The journey of public-private partnerships with the UN is a long one that has brought us to a moment of opportunity, encompassed by SDG17. While appropriate attention is directed to governments doing more and better, ultimately success or failure will depend on the catalyzing of resilient partnerships with the private sector, and with the private sector stepping forward to work within the UN. This report and the All In dialogues it supports will look ahead at partnerships that advance scale and embody inclusiveness for implementation of our shared 2015 agenda.

Public-private partnerships are no longer just a nice to have in the eco-system of inclusive multilateralism. They are a must have.

**SDG 17 and Public Private Partnerships – Catalyst and Accelerator**

Public-private partnership is one of the most buzzed-about but also misunderstood terms on the international development scene.

Beginning with the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and then subsequently in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the United Nations has clearly declared that governments alone cannot achieve the ambitious development targets the United Nations has set for the world. In fact, the SDGs weave “partnership” into each of the 17 goals and Goal 17 is reserved for partnership itself.

Nevertheless, questions persist about the meanings and value of “partnership” in all its incarnations. Academics, governments, multilateral organizations and occasionally private sector actors have dedicated reams of paper to analyzing the history of partnership, trying to refine definitions and design elements of partnerships needed for the SDGs.

And some are concerned that over-reliance on such partnerships distract resources from government action or are pursued as distracting replacements for legally binding action by governments. Yet the stakes are high, and we cannot afford the risks of non-engagement of business and other stakeholders.
GOAL 17 IN 2018: Progress Report

Goal 17 seeks to strengthen global partnerships to support and achieve the ambitious targets of the 2030 Agenda, bringing together national governments, the international community, civil society, the private sector and other actors. Despite advances in certain areas, more needs to be done to accelerate progress. All stakeholders will have to refocus and intensify their efforts on areas where progress has been slow.

- In 2017, net ODA totaled $146.6 billion in 2017, a decrease of 0.6 per cent from 2016 in real terms. ODA as a share of donors’ gross national income (GNI) remained low, at 0.31 per cent.

- In 2016, remittances to low- and lower-middle-income countries were more than three times the amount of ODA they received.

- In LDCs, debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services increased for five consecutive years—from a low of 3.5 per cent in 2011 to 8.6 per cent in 2016.

- In 2016, high-speed fixed-broadband reached 6 per cent of the population in developing countries, compared to 24 per cent in developed countries.

- Total ODA for capacity-building and national planning amounted to $20.4 billion in 2016, representing 18 per cent of total aid allocable by sector, a proportion that has been stable since 2010.

- The developing regions’ share of world merchandise exports declined for two consecutive years: from 45.4 per cent in 2014 to 44.2 per cent in 2016, a sharp contrast to an average annual 1.2 percentage point increase between 2001 and 2012. For LDCs, the share of world merchandise exports decreased from 1.1 per cent to 0.9 per cent between 2013 and 2016, compared to the rise from 0.6 per cent to 1.1 per cent between 2000 and 2013.

- In 2017, 102 countries or areas were implementing national statistical plans. Sub-Saharan Africa remained in the lead, with 31 countries implementing such plans; however, only three of them were fully funded.

- In 2015, developing countries received $541 million in financial support from multilateral and bilateral donors for all areas of statistics. This amount represented only 0.3 per cent of total ODA, short of what is needed to ensure that countries in developing regions are better equipped to implement and monitor their development agendas.

- From 2008 to 2017, 89 per cent of countries or areas conducted at least one population and housing census.

Source: Report of the Secretary-General, The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2018
‘Partnering’ With the UN System - What is it and How is it Changing?

To consider options to strengthen the impact of the private sector’s role in public-private partnerships (PPPs) in UN settings, we must first move toward a common understanding of the desired partnerships and their composition, terms, participants, and outcomes.

We must also find ways to balance the need for fundamental attributes to ensure inclusiveness, track impact and manage risks, with the diversity of such collaborative arrangements. In inclusive multilateralism, we should regard this diversity is a source of innovation, and reflective of the multiplicity of actors, specific challenges and settings for this cooperative engagement. A non-exhaustive history of the use of various terms (partnership, public-private partnership, multi-stakeholder partnership) highlights evolving understanding and experience, and highlights some key points for discussion.

So too does a review of existing UN rules and guidance for partnering or working with the private sector.

Where “partnership” in the common usage might convey a wide range of collaborative activity amongst more or less equal partners, the term “public-private partnership” often applies more narrowly in multilateral contexts - sometimes applying to specific contractual arrangements to provide services including via projects and, even when used more expansively, only rarely implying full integration and equality of the partners in question at every stage of agenda-setting, decision-making and implementation.

"Public-private partnerships" (PPPs) in the more traditional sense are typically joint venture projects to build large-scale public infrastructure projects or other physical plants, such as schools or hospitals, or for the delivery of basic social services, such water, sanitation and electricity, and more recently internet connectivity.

Not surprisingly, governments and inter-governmental bodies may tend to view public private partnerships for the SDGs through their experiences of contractual arrangements where private parties deliver public services. This can ignore the opportunities for innovation and the special capabilities of non-state actors.

Misconceptions about the relative costs and benefits of PPPs often come to the fore. Beyond a general distrust of outsourcing core governmental functions to the private sector, there are claims that PPPs are often more costly to governments than purely publicly-funded projects.

But these criticisms may not withstand scrutiny. Certainly, there have been examples of poorly planned and executed PPPs, but these cannot serve as a basis for dismissing the entire model.

- Criticism of PPPs wrongly assume that they have the luxury of comparing a PPP to a public project that would have been executed instead; to the contrary, adequate supply of public funding cannot be taken for granted and it cannot be assumed that in many instances a project could even be built without private involvement.
Another problem with these criticisms is that they may focus only on financial costs without considering non-financial socio-economic benefits provided by PPPs, such as accelerated delivery (delivering services earlier), enhanced delivery (delivering services to a higher standard) and wider social impacts (greater benefits to society as a whole). Under a more qualitative analysis, considering these non-financial indicators can show that they come out ahead of purely publicly-funded projects (see European PPP Expertise Centre (EPEC)). While measuring non-financial benefits may be methodologically complex, where PPPs are able to deliver these benefits on higher levels than conventionally procured projects, this should be considered in appraising the overall advantages of the PPP model.

PPP is just one part of a vast eco-system of partnerships

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in their recommendations for public governance of PPPs (OECD, 2012), uses a more restrictive definition highlighting the formal character of such partnerships:

“PPPs are long-term contractual arrangements between the government and a private partner whereby the latter delivers and funds public services using a capital asset, sharing the associated risks.”

The US-based National Center for Public Private Partnerships (NCPPP) applies a similarly narrow definition:

“A public-private partnership (P3) is a contractual arrangement between a public agency (federal, state or local) and a private sector entity. Through this agreement, the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) are shared in delivering a service or facility for the use of the general public.”
**SMART criteria for PPPs with the UN**

**Specific:** Registered initiatives should aim for concrete deliverables, contributing to specific goals and targets under the 2030 Agenda. In the case of multi-stakeholder partnerships, each partner should have a clear role to play.

**Measurable:** To facilitate review of progress, registered initiatives should set measurable progress indicators.

**Achievable:** Registered initiatives should set attainable goals & strive to deliver results.

**Resource-based:** Initiatives should have a secured resource base, rather than merely project proposals,

**Time-bound:** Deliverables should be time-specific.

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**Evolution: Attitudes Towards Partnership in the Multilateral System**

**1995**

The 1995 UN Commission on Global Governance preserved States as primary actors but called for building “partnerships – networks of institutions and processes – that enable global actors to pool information, knowledge, and capacities and to develop joint policies and practices on issues of common concerns.”

**2002**

The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) defined “multistakeholder partnerships” (MSPs) as “specific commitments by various partners intended to contribute to and reinforce the implementation of the outcomes of intergovernmental negotiations of the WSSD.”

**2003**

In 2003, the UN Secretary General defined partnerships, including MSPs, “as voluntary and collaborative relationships between various parties, both State and non-State actors, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve a common purpose or undertake a specific task and to share risks, 20 responsibilities, resources, competencies and benefits.”

**2011**

The 2011 Busan declaration recognized “the central role of the private sector in advancing innovation, creating wealth, income and jobs, mobilizing domestic resources and in turn contributing to poverty reduction.” Representatives to the Busan High Level Forum also approved a Joint Statement on Expanding and Enhancing Public and Private Cooperation for Broad-Based, Inclusive, and Sustainable Growth in which they recognized “the diverse forms of engagement that the private sector brings to support development, together with governments, donors, and civil society. These include core business activities, public private partnerships, social responsibility activities, and cross-sector or multi-stakeholder partnerships for development.”

**2012**

The 2012 Rio+20 Summit promoted MSPs. The Rio declaration acknowledges the critical contribution of existing and new MSPs, including PPPs, at different scales and highlights the
importance of partnerships that facilitate the full and effective engagement of all stakeholders to: address complex issues and multidimensional problems; share knowledge and experiences; improve

‘Partnership’ - what is it good for?
How can such a broad scope of definitions of the term ‘partnership’ be better understood to serve as a meaningful vehicle for the kind of collaborations called for in the 2015 outcomes?

In a 2014 report on catalyzing business engagement for development, The Partnering Initiative (TPI) identifies four levels of government interaction with business to achieve the SDGs:

While OECD’s particular definition of PPP appears narrow, OECD’s work under the Global Partnership on Effective Development Cooperation (jointly administered by the UN Development Program and the OECD) offers an alternative view that broadly encompasses the priorities USCIB may seek to advance.

The Global Partnership is a multi-stakeholder platform created at the Fourth High-Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness in Busan in 2011. The International Chamber of Commerce sits on the steering committee of the Global Partnership, undertaking a work-stream to increase private sector engagement (PSE) in development co-operation, recognizing the private sector as key for the financing, job creation, service delivery and innovation needed to achieve the SDGs.

According to the Global Partnership, businesses generate 60 percent of gross domestic product, 80 percent of capital flows, and 90 percent of jobs in developing countries.
**Partnership with business for SDGs – Integral to UN development system reform?**

The UN Secretary General has initiated an ambitious reform to reposition the United Nations Development System (UNDS) aiming to re-aligning its leadership, capacities and accountability mechanisms including in the area of partnerships to meet the demands of delivering on the 2030 Agenda.

As per Secretary General’s Reports in June 2017 and December 2017 on UNDS reform, the United Nations Sustainable Development Group (UNSDG) is leading a system-wide effort. In his December 2017 report, the Secretary-General further committed to six partnership related work streams:

i. UNSDG to agree on a system-wide approach to partnership

ii. Strengthen system-wide integrity, due diligence and risk management, including the 10 Global Compact principles on for private sector engagement

iii. Improved global level governance from the Global Compact

iv. Reinvigoration of UNOP as the global gateway for partnership

v. A system-wide compact with IFIs

vi. Efforts to invigorate UN support for South-South cooperation

The UN ECOSOC Partnership Forum has been the UN’s primary “norm-setting” space for partnerships since 2008. Every year, the Forum provides an opportunity for governments and non-state actors to discuss how to define and promote effective partnerships and how partnerships can best advance the sustainable development agenda and the 17 SDGs.

The 2019 ECOSOC Partnership Forum, co-organized by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP) and the United Nations Global Compact, focused on “Partnerships Driving Inclusive Implementation of the SDGs”

Speaking at the Forum, Mr. Liu Zhenmin, UN Under-Secretary-General for Economic Affairs provided a sense of UN DESA’s latest thinking on partnerships with non-state actors in the context of SDGs:

“Analysis of the VNR reports conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, reveals some common threads regarding multi-stakeholder partnerships and their potential for SDG implementation.

First, it is evident that more and more countries recognize the importance of building strategic and inclusive partnerships with different stakeholders, including the private sector, civil society and local governments.

Second, many countries have recognized the importance of creating an enabling environment for partnerships at the national level.

Third, an increasing number of countries have been witnessing a growing number of private sector initiatives in support of the SDGs.

Finally, different forms of partnerships – public, public-private and multi-stakeholder– are emerging in diverse sectors such as renewable energy, housing, infrastructure, agriculture and technology.

At the same time, there is a growing number of innovative multi-stakeholder initiatives that complement national efforts and help drive an inclusive implementation of the 2030 Agenda.”
**Transformative**
The United Nations has begun to focus on and prioritize transformative partnerships, but how to define them? Often cited examples are the so-called "global partnerships" that emerged in response to the challenge of fulfilling the Millennium Development Goals. Initiatives such as the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria and the GAVI Alliance on vaccines galvanized the global community, including governments, business and civil society to address major challenges, particularly in health. One way to understand this is to think not only about the size and inclusiveness of a partnership, but also since then, other initiatives are underway, whether under the aegis of UN institutions such as UN Environment or linked to multilateral agreements, such as the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. But is it too high a bar, and does it risk devaluing or even discouraging partnerships that are more targeted in focus and more tailored to a particular locale or challenge. Can these smaller scale partnerships be aggregated or linked in to "global partnerships?"

**Resilient**
Another factor given the long-term nature of several sustainability challenges, such as climate change, as well as public resourcing gaps is resilience. For UN entities, the time to set up and run multiple small projects poses problems when budgets are tight. Self-sustaining cooperation that is attuned to the SDG and other shared goals and targets will mesh more easily with timeframes set through multilateral measures.

Several factors contribute to long-term resilient partnerships, both inside the collaboration itself as well as in the enabling frameworks, both situational and institutional, in which it operates and which support it. Institutional infrastructure at national and international levels that can encourage and reflect such multi-stakeholder engagement are important. Resourcing for the partnership itself is also a key consideration.

**Mainstreamed**
A common feedback from those who engage in partnerships in UN settings is that such multistakeholder and non-governmental efforts are regarded as marginal and given relatively little time and attention. Yet such mainstreaming could substantially encourage and provide added value to pursue partnerships in UN settings. One way to capture this opportunity in the SDG arena is through voluntary national reviews (VNRs). These governmental reviews facilitate the sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, with a view to accelerating the implementation of the 2030 Agenda.

VNRs also seek to strengthen policies and institutions of governments and to mobilize multi-stakeholder support and partnerships for the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. So while discussion and presentation of VNRs can be a very time-consuming, making better use of VNRs as a way to integrate collaborative engagements is critical. There is also scope to consider other non-governmental reporting and inputs of experience and progress, to be highlighted during deliberations and discussion.

**Some examples of UN institutional infrastructure for partnerships include:**
The United Nations Office for Partnerships serves as a gateway for partnership building
between the private sector, foundations and other non-State actors and the United Nations system in furtherance of the Sustainable Development Goals.

UNOPS has four main functions:

1. To serve as operational interface between the United Nations Foundation and the United Nations system in support of high-impact projects implemented throughout the world by UN system agencies;
2. To provide administrative support to the United Nations Democracy Fund;
3. To advise, guide and facilitate partnership events and initiatives between the United Nations and non-state actors, such as private sector, foundation and civil society, in support of the Sustainable Development Goals;
4. To serve as the Secretariat for the Secretary-General's Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Advocates.

The Partnership Exchange is the United Nations' annual global gathering for reviewing multi-stakeholder partnerships and voluntary commitments in supporting the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and to explore, and build momentum towards, the creation of the partnering enabling environment. It is organized in the margins of the High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) by United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA) in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Partnerships (UNOP). The 2019 Partnership Exchange will be the fourth one.

The Partnerships for the SDGs online platform is managed by the Division for Sustainable Development Goals, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DSDG/DESA), as are other registries such as the SIDS Action Platform and the Ocean Conference Registry of Voluntary Commitments.

Among other goals, the Global Partnership aims to facilitate agree guidelines and help scale up public-private initiatives that support development by attracting investment and creating 'shared value.' The Global Partnership concept note on Private Sector Engagement (PSE) explains:

“Shared value focuses company leaders on maximizing the competitive value of solving social problems of new customers and in new markets, cost savings, talent retention and more.

“The assumption is that with the help of governments, non-governmental organizations and other stakeholders, business has the power to bring solutions to scale and create real change on monumental social problems (Porter and Marker 2011).”

Further, the Global Partnership calls for a fundamental shift in the public sector and civil society’s approaches. For a long time, positive societal or environmental impact and positive financial results have been considered two separate things.

It has been generally accepted that you could have one or the other, but not both. Creating Shared Value (CSV) is about having both. CSV is a synergy of positive social and environmental impact and positive financial results.”
While this discussion paper is not intended to delve into thematic areas for partnerships, the report of the Committee on Food Security and its High-Level Panel of Experts report on Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (MSPs) offer some useful lessons. The CFS itself is unique in its incorporation of formal input mechanisms for both the private sector and civil society (known, respectively as the Private Sector Mechanism and the Civil Society Mechanism).

While the CFS retains its primary character as an intergovernmental body (voting, for example, is reserved to member states), it should be a particularly fertile ground for both informal and formal partnership.

Nevertheless, experience in the Private Sector Mechanism has shown the CFS and FAO secretariats continue to harbor reservations about open dialogue with the private sector and instead hold a fairly traditional view of “partnership,” tending toward formal contractual arrangements and memoranda of understanding to deliver specific projects.

The CFS, despite its institutional incorporation of a Private Sector Mechanism, has also not been immune from calls for restrictions on private sector participation due to concerns about “conflict of interest.” On the margins of the 2016 CFS plenary, the Civil Society Mechanism hosted an event titled “Conflicts of Interest in Food security and Nutrition Policies: Which way forward for the CFS?”

Speakers at that event generally argued the concepts of multi-stake-holder partnerships and inclusion inappropriately blur valid dividing lines between actors and called for CFS to implement “conflict of interest” policies to preclude private sector interests from participating in agenda-setting and policy-development. Conversely, the Private Sector Mechanism, represented at the side event by its secretariat the International Agrifood Network and in writing, has noted “Since all parties at CFS are working on food security, nutrition and agriculture, all parties innately have interests. The cases where those interests intersect with fiduciary relationships and proposed funding should be the focus of conflicts of interest measures. Such potential cases may exist among any actor of CFS.”

Interestingly, the report on MSPs takes a broader and more positive view of partnership. There are positive signs in the draft including a suggestion that perhaps the “P” in MSP should be understood to stand for “participation” - allowing a broad umbrella under which both formal and informal partnerships can be assessed. The report goes on to examine in detail MSPs for food security and nutrition and seek to cluster types of MSPs, including those centered on knowledge, policy, action and resource mobilization.
Partnering with the UN on the SDGs: Building on a Strong Foundation

The Rio+20 Conference led to the announcement of hundreds of initiatives, which number in the thousands. These commitments are tracked in the SD in Action Registry, which was launched shortly after Rio+20 to track all official registered voluntary initiatives and to facilitate access to other registries and initiatives that promote sustainable development (known as “Action Networks”) that focus on particular themes, such as Sustainable Energy for All Initiative (SE4All), the UN Global Compact, Every Woman Every Child (EWEC), the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), the Action Network on Sustainable Transport and the action network on Partnerships for Small Island Developing States. The current draft of the Financing for Development Outcome Document recognizes the contribution of these partnerships and funds and calls for their reinforcement, as well as new initiatives.

It should be kept in mind, however, that there are many kinds of public-private partnerships operating that are not global funds or registered with the U.N., such as many of the initiatives catalogued on this site (see Business+ SDGs to explore Goal by Goal).

Governments have the task of establishing enabling governing environments for productive societies. In the context of partnerships, what is needed most are effective policies for the private sector to collaborate with government agencies and civil society in assessing partnership opportunities across diverse sectors and social needs (see DFID 2003).

Despite - or maybe because of - the growing international consensus that partnerships with the private sector are integral to achieving the SDGs, the very concept of partnership with the private sector has become subject to scrutiny.

In fact, UN Partnerships with business are sometimes regarded with suspicion and criticized. While the ambition of fully integrated action and shared value seems the highest goal for partnerships, criticism also seems to increase at every stage of aspiration. Several key themes are referred to in order to challenge such partnerships:

- The participants themselves - are all actors legitimate partnership participants? Is there any risk of imbalance of power, conflict of interest or risk?
- The rationale for partnership - is there a compelling reason to take a public-private approach rather than a government - overseen and/or funded approach?
- The outcome of partnership - are there really increased benefits and decreased costs?

Many of the most strident criticisms relate to the participants themselves, particularly when participants hail from the private sector. This dynamic has manifested itself with governments and UN entities prioritizing “managing risks” with the private sector at the expense of considering incentives, enabling frameworks and other considerations.
# Existing Platforms to Promote Partnerships

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<td>PPP (Infrastructure)</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Resource platform, matching</td>
<td>Munich</td>
<td>Global</td>
<td>Developing world</td>
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<td>Member fees</td>
<td>PPP (Infrastructure)</td>
<td>Business</td>
<td>Resource platform, matching, brokering, convening</td>
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<td>National</td>
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<td>Governments, development banks</td>
<td>PPP (Infrastructure)</td>
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<td>Technical assistance</td>
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<td>Governments, development banks, international organizations</td>
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<td>Privately held company</td>
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<td>SDGs</td>
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<td>Registry of voluntary commitaments and MSPs</td>
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Business Examples of Public Private Partnerships

For more business examples, please visit www.businessfor2030.org

Cargill has worked with the World Food Program USA (WFP USA) and the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP) globally since 2001, providing more than $12 million in support to improve the health and nutrition of people in need in Africa, Central and South America and Asia. In addition to supporting famine response in 2012 and 2017, Cargill is working to advance long-term food and nutrition security. In 2016, Cargill announced a new two-year, $1 million effort to support WFP’s Homegrown School Meals Program in Honduras, Indonesia and Kenya. This new initiative will work with schools and local governments to improve the school meal nutrition and connect local farmers to the supply chains. More information is available at Cargill stories.

As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility strategy, Ferrero continues to engage in certification programs, institutional engagement, projects and partnerships, with the aim to safeguard the future of the cocoa sector, supporting and improving cocoa farming sustainability.

Ferrero has signed multiple agreements that focus on collective action to end deforestation and to safeguard natural capital. For example, Ferrero signed the New York Declaration on Forests by the United Nations and endorsed the HCS Approach (HCSA), a methodology enabling companies to understand forest areas to be protected for their high carbon and biodiversity values.

Furthermore, at the UN Climate Change Conference (COP23) in Bonn on 16th November 2017, the Ferrero Group committed to the Frameworks For Action alongside other chocolate and cocoa companies, with the aim to improve forest protection and restoration, sustainable cocoa production and farmer livelihoods.

Poor diet is a leading risk factor for early death. Each year, more than 10 million men and women lose their lives due to chronic diseases directly related to poor diet. Despite this crisis, and the commitment to work in a multi-stakeholder manner as enshrined in SDG 17, governments and businesses are missing opportunities to work together to improve nutrition.

Many stakeholders think that the absence of a set of guiding principles is a barrier to greater positive collaboration. Hence, the discussion facilitated by Wilton Park in late 2017 between stakeholders from the private and public sectors sought to try to move towards a set of guiding principles. The following guiding principles emerged from those discussions. We put them forward as a contribution to the wider dialogue that must happen to arrive at a consensus on the why, what, when, how and who of public-private engagements to improve nutrition.
PRINCIPLE #1: ALIGNMENT - Governments have the unique and singular responsibility to establish the goals and the priorities for national and global action to improve nutrition, and to do this based on the best available scientific evidence. The establishment of these goals, priorities and the policies behind them is a critical task requiring public debate and engagement with all stakeholders, including businesses which shape food systems. It is incumbent on all stakeholders to act transparently and with integrity in carrying out these tasks. Equally, public policy is enhanced when all actors in the food system can contribute in open and accountable fora. This principle of open debate and mutual accountability in surfacing interests and evolving policy is a higher principle within which engagements should be developed. As such, dialogue should not exclude any stakeholder with the commitment and potential capacity to contribute to the achievement of one or more of the nutrition goals.

PRINCIPLE #2: PRIORITIZATION - To accelerate progress in achieving the global nutrition goals, governments and businesses agree to prioritize action that advances the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and World Health Assembly (WHA) Global Nutrition Targets: reducing childhood stunting and wasting and improving the nutritional needs of adolescent girls, pregnant and lactating women and older persons (SDG 2.2); reducing the diet-related risks of death from non-communicable diseases (SDG 3.4); reducing female anemia (WHA 2), low birth weight (WHA 3), and child overweight (WHA 4); and increasing exclusive breastfeeding (WHA 5).

PRINCIPLE #3: IMPACT - Governments and businesses should base their investment decisions on an unbiased and transparent assessment of the peer-reviewed scientific evidence, relying on systematic reviews when available. A clear lack of evidence should not be an excuse for inaction as long the basis for action is transparent.

PRINCIPLE #4 DATA - Governments and businesses will generate and share data relevant to the global nutrition goals and will cooperate on data collection relating to the daily diets and nutritional status of populations, the coverage of specific nutrition-related interventions, the attitudes and behaviors of consumers and consumer uptake of specific nutrition-related products and services. These data must be screened for quality by the scientific community and their conclusions published in peer-reviewed journals. Combining these data and making them publicly available, will improve government nutrition information systems, better align business efforts to invest in pro-nutrition actions (e.g. labeling, packaging, marketing), and enhance efforts to hold governments and businesses accountable for progress to the nutrition goals.

PRINCIPLE #5 INNOVATION - Governments and businesses will increase their efforts to invest in new technologies that can more cost-effectively reduce malnutrition by increasing the availability and affordability of nutritious safe foods. Joint efforts to build a pipeline of innovations with the power to make it easier for consumers, businesses and governments to make healthy food choices should be prioritized.

PRINCIPLE #6 ACCOUNTABILITY - Governments and businesses should demonstrate their accountability to the global nutrition goals by routinely measuring the impact of their individual and collective efforts against the relevant SDG targets and making the results available to their respective stakeholders and to the general public in easily accessible formats. The use of randomized control trials conducted by independent parties and other gold standard methods to measure the impact of government- business partnerships should be increased and supported.

Governments and businesses will commit to greater accountability and transparency in actions affecting the nutritional status of all their stakeholders (e.g. citizens, consumers, employees etc.). They will cooperate with international accountability efforts such as the Global Nutrition Report, the Access to Nutrition Index, the International Network for Food and Obesity/Non-communicable Diseases (NCDs) Research, Monitoring and Action Support (INFORMAS) and Global Open Data for Agriculture and Nutrition (GODAN). Greater accountability will improve the targeting of investments by demonstrating the success or failure of specific interventions, by improving the quality of the evidence-base and nutrition science, and by building a greater level of trust among stakeholders that will in turn facilitate further action and impact.

PRINCIPLE #7 INCLUSION - Government and business engagement to advance the nutrition goals will require processes that are transparent, open, and inclusive; where all actors operate with accountability, integrity and mutual respect. While engagement should not compromise any individual organization’s independence or reputation, governments and businesses acknowledge that their interdependence and mutual accountability in the service of the nutrition goals will frequently require joint but de-conflicted work processes. As noted above, more needs to be done to establish clear mechanisms to define and measure engagement, but transparent reporting and accountability are fundamental, as is clear compliance with established policies. Upholding these basic ingredients is a critical part of these principles, and an essential requirement to enter into a public-private engagement recognised under them.
Conclusions and the Way Ahead

Partnerships in any context are as challenging as they are desirable, and none more so than when the actors are diverse and the stakes are high, as they are in advancing the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Each of the stakeholders that this discussion starter paper has referenced: the UN system in all its diversity, national governments, business and other non-state actors, have important roles in inclusive multilateralism. Since the natural vehicle for this role is collaboration, it is in all our interests to improve that collaboration, including from the standpoints of transparency, inclusiveness, impact, and resilience.

It is interesting to note that several of the discussed challenges are common across UN partnerships as well as those in which the UN is not involved. A “Study of Partnerships and Initiatives Registered on the UN SDG Partnerships Platform” by Dr. Emily Clough, Dr. Graham Long, and Dr. Katharine Rietig commissioned for the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs, found that, “It is significant that UN-associated partnerships, while reporting a little more, and aligning their objectives more frequently to the SDGs, do not escape the same challenges, and do not handle governance or accountability in markedly different ways. They are also not significantly more aligned, structurally, to the SDGs.”

This suggests that in spite of the diversity of partnerships, some of the improvements needed may thus be relevant across stakeholders, whether from public or private sectors, and across institutions.

Continuous improvement is a core philosophy and practice across the private sector, and one which is clearly applicable to the practice of public-private partnerships with the UN. Of course, innovation always brings risks, and rather than avoiding risk to the point of paralysis and sectoral disqualifications, better ways to manage and share risks are needed. But in addition to the variety of partnerships that will contribute their own “recipes for success” individually, we do see potential and need to join forces on solutions that would bring broad benefit to multiple stakeholders across partnerships and their appropriate support and mainstreaming into the multilateral system.

The ‘All In’ initiative reflects decades of experience in business partnership and dialogue in the multilateral system, a journey which has demonstrated time and again how powerful and necessary shared goals AND shared action can be. Bjorn Stigson, previous President of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), said that “Business cannot succeed in societies that fail. Likewise, where and when business is stifled, societies fail to thrive.’ We would suggest a corollary of this would be that the success of the multilateral system depends substantially on business, and when business is not engaged, that system does not have all it needs to rise to important societal challenges.

Partnerships with the UN are vital to stepping up to the 2030 imperatives: addressing poverty and driving shared prosperity, protecting the planet and its people and leaving no-one behind. Antonio Guterres wrote in his Vision Statement in 2016,
“To ensure effective multilateralism, the UN needs to develop a strong culture of partnership…:

…enhancing engagement with civil society and the private sector. Their role providing global public goods must be fully recognized. Relevant UN organizations should develop strategic cooperation with their civil society partners.”

The ‘All In’ initiative looks forward to helping to realize this vision of strategic cooperation with the UN, starting from an encouraging, innovative and mainstreamed foundation of shared value partnerships.
Suggested Discussion Questions

Innovation towards impactful partnerships is timely and moving ahead. This is the moment to have a broader and engaged discussion, which we look forward to the May 8 Geneva Roundtable and other interactions in the ‘All In’ initiative to take the potential for progress and impact further.

We ask you to consider and weigh in on questions such as:

- How can this broad scope of definitions of the term ‘partnership’ be better understood in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development – Is it a strength or weakness?

- What constitutes effective multi-stakeholder partnership platforms at national and global levels? How can such platforms facilitate and harness the value-addition of different stakeholders to enhance mutual accountability and synergy while avoiding a one size fits all?

- How can partnership platforms effectively promote results-based reporting by different stakeholders and inclusive, regular joint review of progress in support of the SDGs? What are some innovative ways to institutionalize learning mechanisms (capacity building, monitoring and review) within partnerships and national policy framework at large?

- How do we balance consistency and clear attributes for success with the importance of innovation and flexibility?

- What is special and different about partnering with governments and the UN toward shared goals?

- How do we balance the focus on the perspectives of governments and intergovernmental bodies with the practical and real world needs of non-state entities, and in this case the business community?

What are the enabling frameworks (national, international, institutional) frameworks and key attributes for successful and impactful public private partnerships with the UN that:

- Support Shared Value
- Enhance Transparency
- Mainstream Cooperation
- Promote Resilience?
About the ‘All In’ Campaign
Faced with the urgent need to make faster and smarter progress towards achieving the ambitions of a range of international agreements, including the Addis Ababa Action Agenda, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the UN Framework on Climate Change, inclusive multilateralism is essential.

‘All In’ seeks to spark a global conversation about the benefits of inclusive multilateralism, which we hope will move the needle towards more effective ways to involve business and other important stakeholders in the UN system while maintaining transparency and accountability and strengthening the intergovernmental nature of the multilateral system.

In 2019, ‘All In’ is bringing policymakers, representatives of UN bodies, NGOs and academia together global businesses together in UN cities to discuss ways to engage all industry sectors to achieve the SDG goals and other 2015 outcomes through dialogue and partnership. Our objective is to identify opportunities to address challenges and further opportunities to promote inclusiveness, build trust and scale up measurable impact, which we will include in a collaborative ‘All In’ Action plan to be launched in 2020.

About USCIB
The United States Council for International Business advances the global interests of American business. We do so through advocacy that calls for an open system of world trade, finance and investment, where business can flourish and contribute to economic growth, human welfare and environmental protection.

HOW WE OPERATE
USCIB’s advocacy spans a broad range of policy issues, leveraging the expertise of our business members and a unique network of global business organizations: the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC), Business at OECD (BIAC), and the International Organization of Employers (IOE). Through these organizations’ official consultative status in major intergovernmental forums, USCIB represents American business positions both to the U.S. government and throughout the UN system, the OECD and the International Labor Organization.

Our policy positions are developed by our membership, encompassing more than 300 global corporations, professional firms and industry associations, who work through our committees to provide business input for USCIB to convey to policymakers at home and abroad.

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